

Tenneco Minerals
A Tenneco Company

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*Wayne: Auto & file
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May 18, 1992

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MAY 29 1992

**DIVISION OF
OIL GAS & MINING**

Mr. Don Ostler, Executive Secretary
State of Utah
Division of Water Quality
Department of Environmental Quality
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-4870

RE: Stipulation and Consent Order
Docket No. I91-03, Goldstrike Mine

Dear Mr. Ostler:

This letter is in response to the Division's March 27, 1992 letter regarding the above referenced Stipulation and Consent Order. In the March 27, 1992 letter, the Division stated that "while the investigation of the clay liners beneath the process ponds has been completed, the issue of reclamation (Consent Order 4) has not been satisfactorily addressed....Therefore, we are directing Tenneco to proceed with developing a reclamation plan for the clay liners and a portion of pad 1."

Tenneco Minerals' independent consultant, JBR Consultants, believes that no remediation of the barren pond clay liner is warranted due to the extremely low levels of cyanide detected as stated in the May 15, 1991 and February 3, 1992 letters to the Division. However, in Tenneco Minerals' June 13 and June 24, 1991 letters to the Division, Tenneco Minerals committed to conducting additional sampling of the barren pond clay liner in preparation for site closure.

A similar number of samples will be obtained and analyzed by an independent laboratory using the appropriate RCRA characteristic tests. If the laboratory analyses indicate that the barren pond clay liner is not a hazardous waste, then the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining reclamation plan will be followed for pond closure (see attached plan). If the laboratory analyses indicate that the barren pond clay liner is a hazardous waste, then the affected material will be disposed of in an approved hazardous waste landfill.

I presume the Division's requirement for the development of a reclamation plan for Pad 1 is in regard to Tenneco Minerals' October 16-17, 1990 Pad 1 seepage of process solutions since this is not mentioned in the signed Stipulation and Consent Order dated October 8, 1991.

Tenneco Minerals conducted an extensive investigation of the affected area from this seepage and submitted the results of this investigation to the Division on February 6, 1991. The investigation report included the results as well as corrective action measures to re-establish the sump area. The report recommended that environmental remediation was not warranted since virtually all of the cyanide released had been completely volatilized or attenuated by the fill material. However, during Tenneco Minerals' February 7, 1991 meeting with the Division, as a precautionary measure, Tenneco proposed to remove the affected low density fill

Tenneco Minerals

MR. DON OSTLER
STIPULATION AND CONSENT ORDER

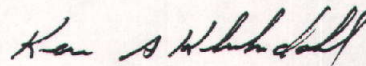
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material (including the clay) within the vicinity of the sump and place the material onto Leach Pad 1. The Division concurred with Tenneco Minerals plans during the meeting. The affected material including the clay liner was removed and placed on Pad 1 during Tenneco's February 1991 rework of the Heap Leach Pad sump area. Therefore, Tenneco Minerals has already addressed this area of concern.

If you have any questions on the above, please call me at (801) 574-3164.

Sincerely,

TENNECO MINERALS COMPANY



Ken A. Kluksdahl
Mine Manager

KAK:bas

Enclosure:

cc: M. Keller - VanCott, Bagley
L. Braxton - UDOGM
L. Gore - BLM
J. Badger - TMC